

# An introduction to Promise programs

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Promise programs differ from traditional financial aid in that they seek to **transform schools and communities**, not simply award scholarships.

- Focus on a geographically bounded community (usually a school district)
- Early awareness of scholarship eligibility
- Most or all students within a district are eligible
- Long duration allows people to make choices based on the program's benefits

# A working definition

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Promise communities are those that seek to transform themselves by making a ***long-term investment in education through place-based scholarships.***

While these programs vary in their structure, they all seek to:

- expand access to and success in higher education
- deepen the college-going culture in K-12 systems
- support local community and economic development

# The Promise movement

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- Since the Kalamazoo Promise was announced, @ 40 communities in 18 states have created Promise programs
- Six PromiseNet conferences since 2008 have drawn attendees from @ 50 communities
- Promise programs exist across the United States in communities of all sizes and types
- Related state and national initiatives include Tennessee Promise and President Obama's proposed "America's College Promise."

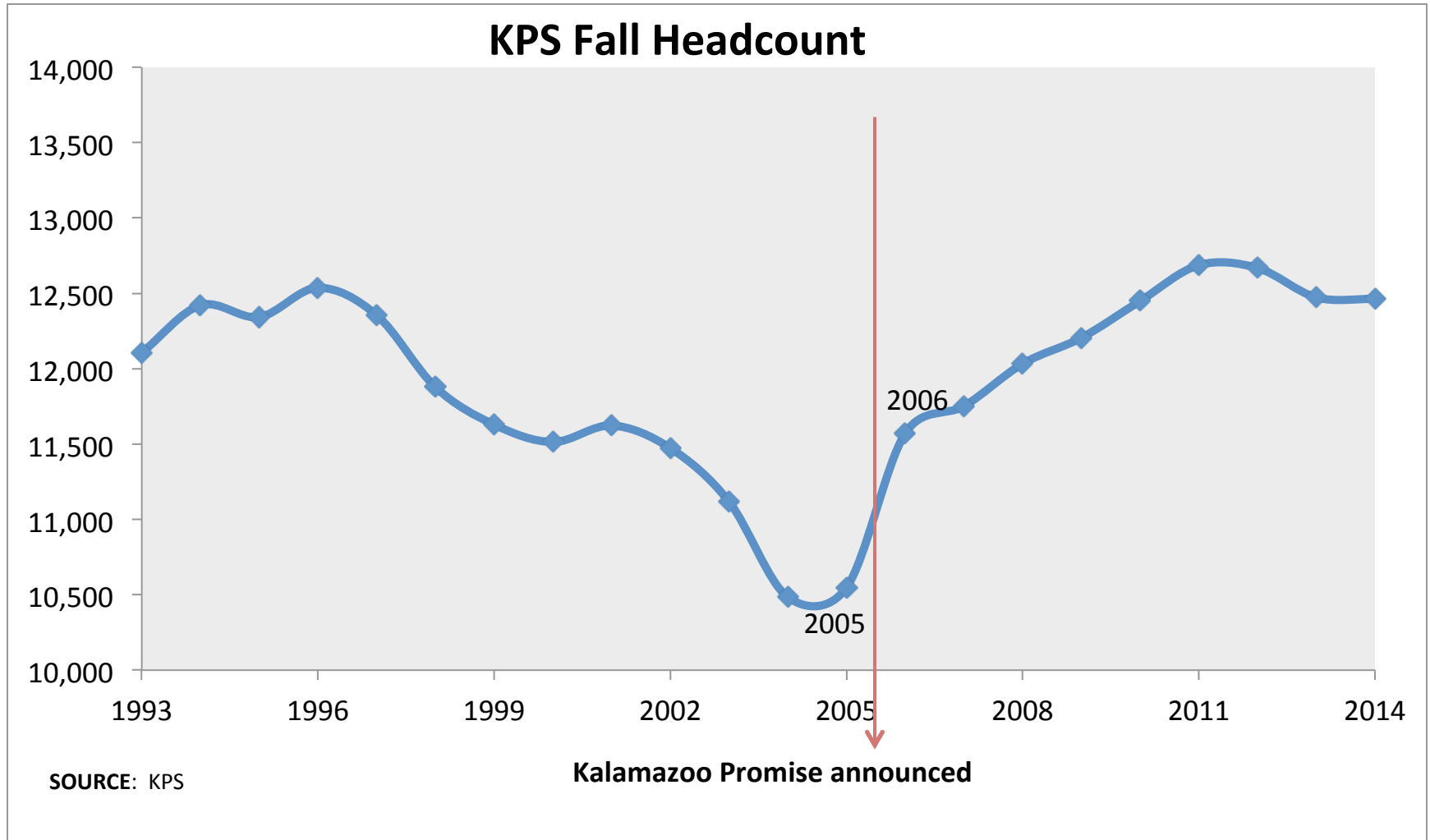


# Variations among Promise programs

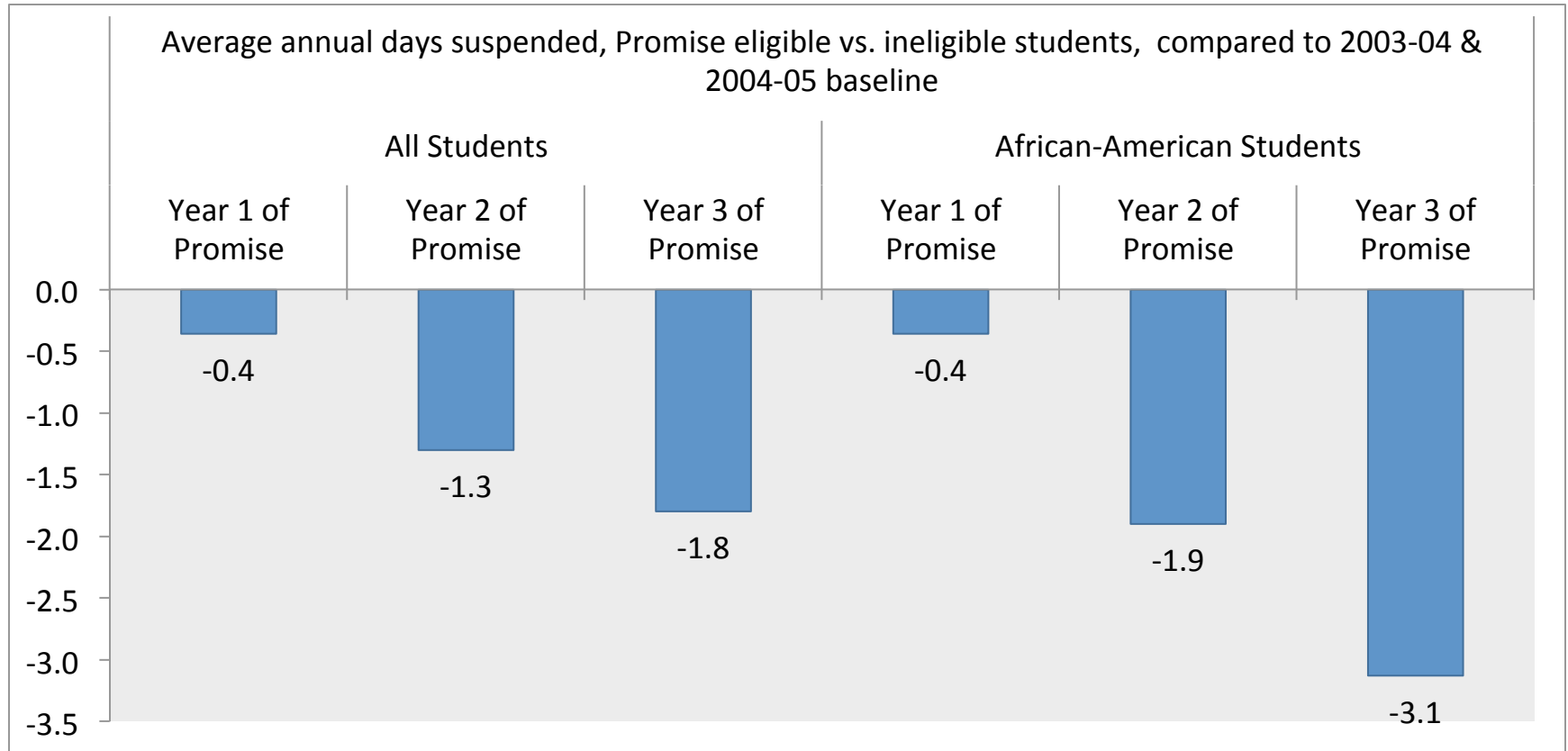
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- Student eligibility
  - Universal, merit-based, or needs-based
- Eligible post-secondary institutions
  - Restrictive or expansive
- Scholarship structure and amount
  - First or last dollar, Flat grant or variable tuition
- Student support services

After declining for many years, KPS enrollment rose dramatically after Kalamazoo Promise was announced

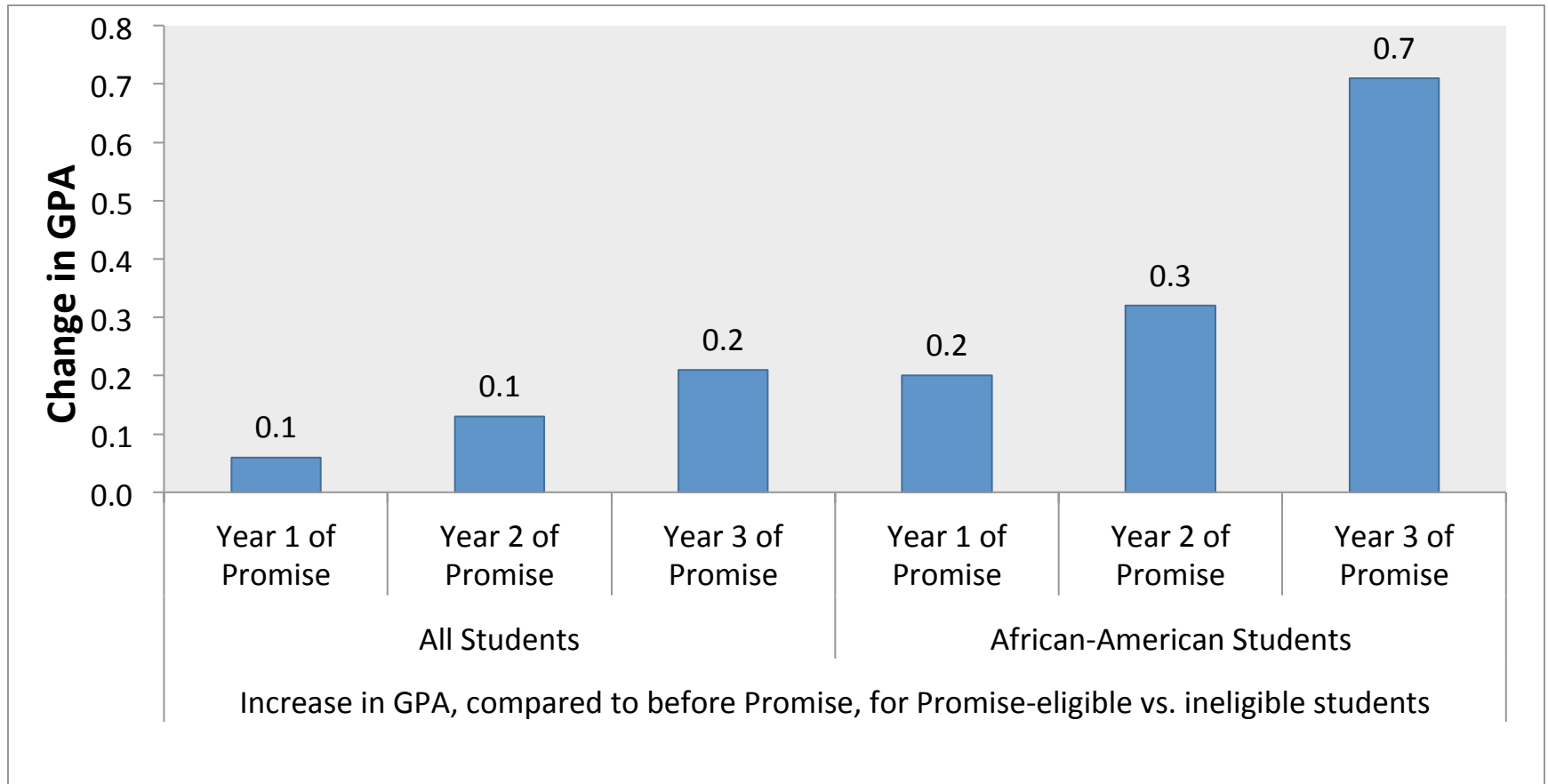


# Days suspended declined after Kalamazoo Promise was announced



Source: Bartik and Lachowska (2012)

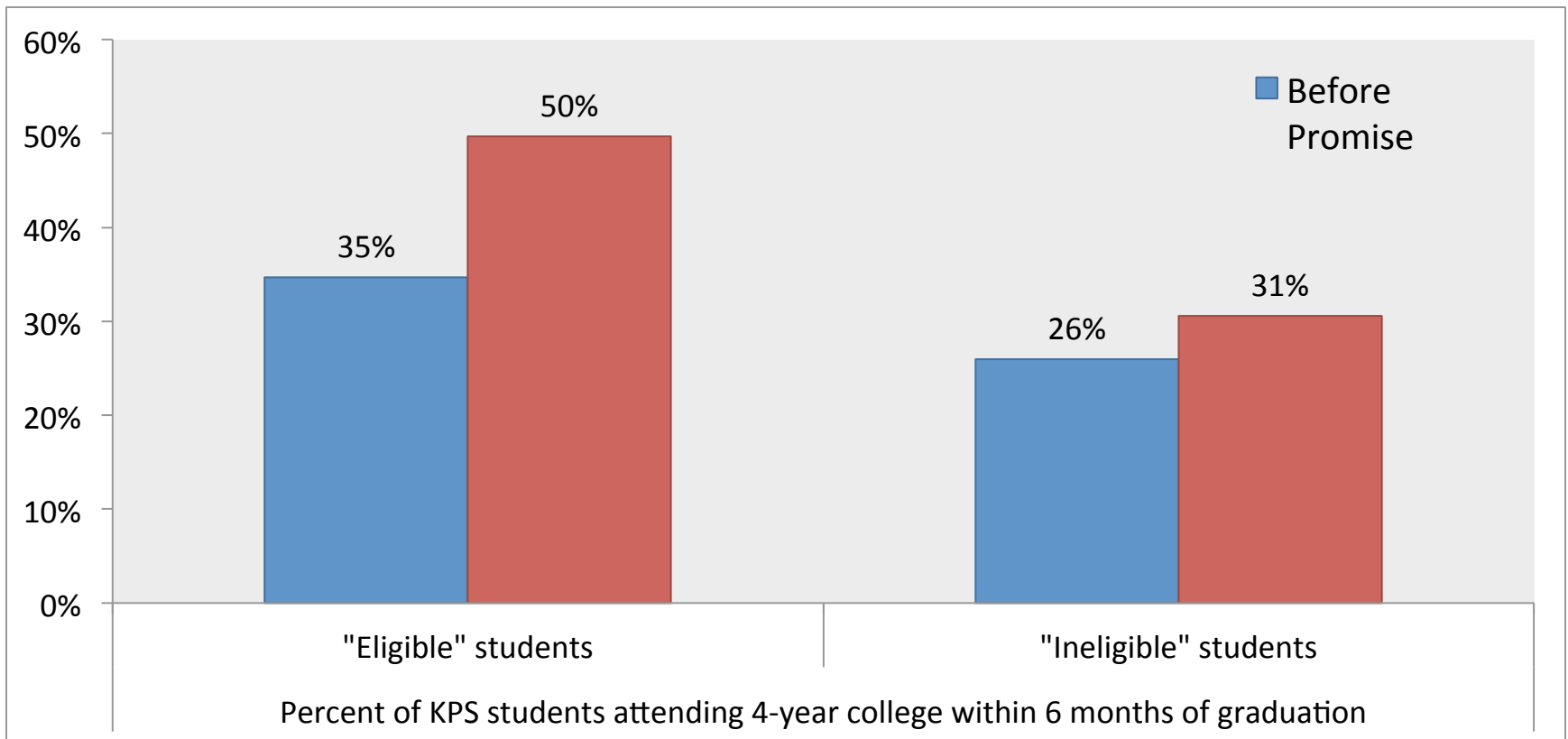
# High school GPA rose for African-American students after Kalamazoo Promise was announced



Source: Bartik and Lachowska (2012)

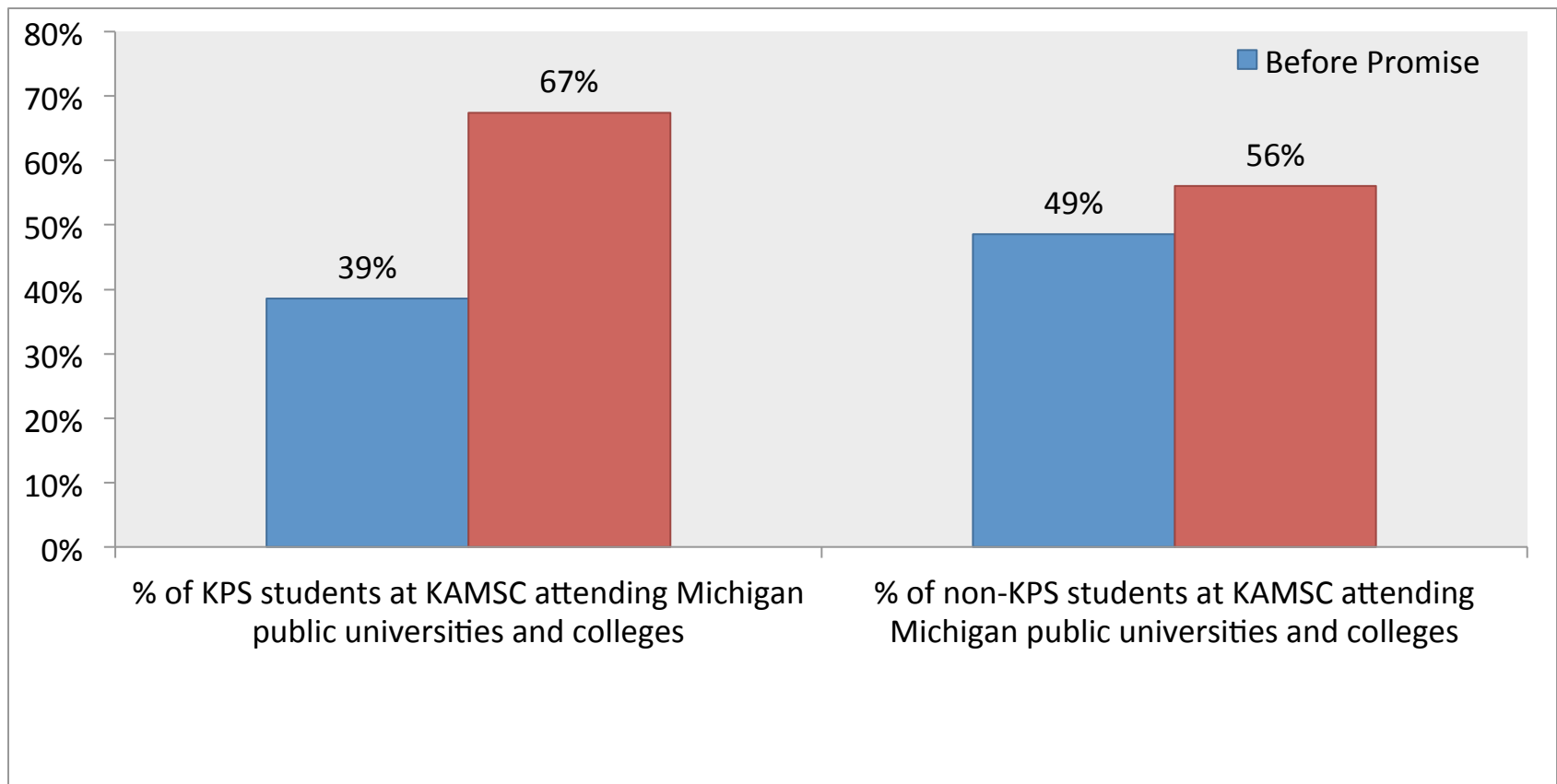


## Four-year college attendance increased with introduction of the Kalamazoo Promise



Source: Bartik, Hershbein and Lachowska (forthcoming 2015)

## Promise tilted college enrollments towards Michigan public universities & colleges



Source: Miller-Adams and Timmeney (2013)

# Resources

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- Research on the Kalamazoo Promise and Place-Based Scholarships, W.E. Upjohn Institute website
  - <http://www.upjohn.org>
- PromiseNet 2015
  - November 10-12, Kalamazoo, MI
  - <http://promisenet.net>
- Promise Community Resources
  - <http://promisenet.net>
- Questions or comments
  - [miller-adams@upjohn.org](mailto:miller-adams@upjohn.org)

# Sources cited

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Bartik, Timothy J., and Marta Lachowska. 2012. "The Short-Term Effects of the Kalamazoo Promise Scholarship on Student Outcomes." Upjohn Institute Working Paper 12-186

Bartik, Timothy J., Brad Hershbein, and Marta Lachowska, "Longer-Term Effects of the Kalamazoo Promise Scholarship on College Enrollment, Persistence, and Completion," Upjohn Institute Working Paper, Forthcoming 2015

Miller-Adams, Michelle and Bridget Timmeney. 2013. "The Impact of the Kalamazoo Promise on College Choice: An Analysis of Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center Graduates." Policy Paper No. 2013-014.

\* These papers are available on the Upjohn Institute website.